

Employment Security Department
MAJOR LEGISLATIVE CHANGES IN UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFIT PROVISIONS AT A GLANCE
(Items entered only when changes take effect)

Changes In	Weekly Benefit Amount (WBA)	Maximum Benefits (Duration)	Qualifying Requirement	Disqualification Provision	Miscellaneous
1937	50% of fulltime weekly wage. Minimum--not specified. Maximum--\$15.	Lesser of 16 times the weekly benefit amount (WBA) or 1/6 base year wages.	16 times WBA.	Voluntary Quit--2 weeks, but subsequent earnings of WBA in 1 week ends disqualification. Misconduct--2 to 5 weeks, but subsequent earnings of WBA in 1 week ends disqualification. Work Refusal--1 to 5 weeks.	Base Year--Individual: first 8 of last 9 completed calendar quarters. Benefit Year--Individual: 52 weeks beginning with first compensable week. Waiting Period--2 weeks for each spell of unemployment (limit of 5). Nondeductible Weekly Earnings--1/6 wages over \$3. Seasonal Provision--On industry basis.
1939	1/20 of high quarter wages. Minimum--\$7. Maximum--\$15.	Lesser of 16 times WBA or 1/3 base year wages.	\$200.		Base Year--Individual: first 4 of last 5 completed calendar quarters. Benefit Year--Individual: 52 weeks beginning with week of first valid claim. Waiting Period--2 weeks in benefit year. Nondeductible Weekly Earnings--\$3. Seasonal Provision--Changed to individual employer basis.

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1941				<p>Voluntary Quit--Work Connected--2 to 5 weeks.</p> <p>Voluntary Quit--Personal--return to work for 4 weeks with earnings of \$50.</p> <p>Misrepresentation--no more than 26 weeks.</p>	
1943				<p>Pregnancy--women who quit work because of pregnancy presumed not able to or available for work.</p>	<p>Waiting Period--1 week in benefit year.</p>
1945	<p>Determined by formula: \$10 + \$1 for each \$100 or fraction thereof that base year wages exceed \$799.99. Minimum--\$10. Maximum--\$25.</p>	<p>Determined by schedule related to base year wages. Minimum--12 times WBA. Maximum--26 times WBA.</p>	\$300.	<p>Voluntary Quit--no more than 4 weeks.</p> <p>Misconduct--no more than 4 weeks.</p> <p>Work Refusal--no more than 4 weeks.</p>	<p>Benefit Year--Uniform: July through the following June.</p> <p>Base Year--Uniform: the calendar year preceding the first day of the benefit year.</p> <p>Nondeductible Weekly Earnings--\$5.</p>
1949	<p>Formula revised slightly: \$10 + \$1 for each \$100 or fraction thereof that base year wages exceed \$699.99.</p>	<p>Schedule revised. Minimum--15 times WBA.</p>	\$600.	<p>Voluntary Quit--5 weeks in each of which claimant files an eligible claim; subsequent work voids disqualification.</p> <p>Misconduct--5 weeks in each of which claimant files an eligible claim; subsequent work voids disqualification.</p> <p>Work Refusal--5 weeks in each of which claimant files an eligible claim; subsequent work voids disqualification.</p>	<p>Seasonal Provision—Repealed.</p>

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----- 1951	----- Maximum-- \$30.	-----	-----	Misrepresentation--52 weeks. ----- Voluntary Quit--5 weeks. Misconduct--5 weeks. Work Refusal--5 weeks. Misrepresentation--26 weeks beginning with first claim after determination of disqualification; limit of 2 years.	----- Nondeductible Weekly Earnings--\$8.
----- 1955	----- Determined by schedule. Minimum--\$17 Maximum-- \$35.	----- Determined by schedule. Minimum--12 times WBA. Maximum--26 times WBA.	----- \$800.	----- Pregnancy--Same presumption of unavailability as before; in any event, claimant is disqualified for 10 weeks prior to expected confinement and 4 weeks after childbirth.	-----
----- 1959	----- Determined by formula: \$17 + \$1 for each \$125 or fraction thereof that base year wages exceed \$924.99. Minimum-- \$17. Maximum-- \$42.	----- Lesser of 30 times WBA or 1/3 base year wages.	-----	----- Work Refusal--Disqualified until claimant has earned wages equal to suspended benefit amount in each of 5 weeks.	----- Nondeductible Weekly Earnings-- \$12.
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1970	1/25 of high quarter earnings. Minimum--\$17. Maximum--50% of average weekly wage in covered employment.		15% of average annual wage in covered employment.	<p>Voluntary Quit--10 weeks or earnings of at least WBA in each of 5 weeks.</p> <p>Misconduct--10 weeks or earnings of at least WBA in each of 5 weeks.</p> <p>Pregnancy--Claimant who quits work because of pregnancy is disqualified through terminal week of pregnancy; in any event, is disqualified for the 17 weeks prior to expected confinement and the 6 weeks after childbirth.</p>	<p>Base Year--Individual: first 4 of last 5 completed calendar quarters.</p> <p>Benefit Year--Individual: 52 weeks beginning with week of valid claim.</p> <p>State Extended Benefits--Payable when 52-week IUR is 5% and 13-week IUR is 120% of average of comparable periods in last two years; amount payable is lesser of 50% of regular entitlement or 13 times WBA.</p> <p>Federal-State Extended Benefits--Payable under national or state triggers: NATIONAL TRIGGER--when national IUR is at least 4.5% for each of 3 consecutive calendar months. STATE TRIGGER--when state 13-week IUR is 4% and 120% of average of comparable periods in last two years.</p> <p>Amount payable is lesser of 50% of regular entitlement or 13 times WBA. Conforming state legislation was passed in January 1971 and was made retroactive to October 1970.</p> <p>Pensions--If financed by base year employer, the amount in excess of \$12 per week is deducted from WBA and total entitlement as wages; social security pensions excluded.</p>

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1971			15% of average annual wage AND either of the following: 16 weeks of work at 15% of average weekly wage OR 600 hours of work. Refilers must have earned 6 times WBA in last half of base year.		State Extended Benefits--Program ends October 2, 1971.
1972					Federal-State Extended Benefits-STATE TRIGGER--120% rule suspended.
1973				Pregnancy--Same disqualification for quit as before; in any event, is disqualified if precluded from working because of pregnancy related federal or state statute or administrative rule or regulation.	Nondeductible Weekly Earnings--1/4 wages above \$5.
1975				Pregnancy--Special disqualification for pregnancy repealed.	Temporary Total Disability (TTD) creates a special base year for those injured on-the-job.

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1977	1/25 of average of two high-quarter earnings. Minimum--\$17. Maximum--55% of average weekly wage in covered employment. Maximum to increase to 60% when June 30 fund balance at least 3.5% of total wages.			<p>Voluntary Quit--Good cause is limited to work-connected factors with the following exceptions: to accept job offer and illness of claimant or his or her immediate family. Disqualification continues until wages earned of at least WBA in each of 5 weeks.</p> <p>Voluntary Quit for Marital or Family Responsibilities--10 weeks of reporting to the department or earnings of at least WBA in each of 5 weeks.</p> <p>Misconduct--In most cases, earnings of at least WBA in each of 5 weeks; for felony misconduct base year wage credits cancelled.</p> <p>Student--Full-time students must demonstrate by preponderance of evidence availability for work.</p>	<p>Federal-State Extended Benefits: NATIONAL TRIGGER--when national IUR for previous 13 weeks averages 4.5% or more.</p> <p>STATE TRIGGER--120% rule reinstated, but if IUR is 5% or more can be disregarded.</p>
1978			680 hours of work.		
1980	Minimum--15% of average weekly wage in covered employment.				Pensions--Prorated weekly amount of any pension (including social security) is deducted from the WBA.

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1981				Eligibility for federal-state extended benefits: refusal of suitable work involves disqualification until work is obtained in 4 weeks with earnings of 4 times the WBA--unless good prospects for obtaining work in current occupation (April 1981); suitable work is any work within the claimant's capabilities.	Pensions--if financed by base year employer, the prorated weekly amount is deducted from the WBA with consideration given to amount of employee contributions. National trigger for extended benefits eliminated August 1981.
1982			Additional qualifying requirement for extended benefits: 40 times WBA in base year earnings.		State trigger for extended benefits changed to 5% and 120% of average for comparable periods in last two years; alternative 6% trigger not adopted. State additional benefits program providing up to 13 weeks of benefits beginning April 1982; to end February 1983; payable during extended benefit period based on 52-week IUR and no comparable federal program.
1983					State additional benefits program extended through March 1984. Alternative state trigger for extended benefits of 6% adopted through April 1984. Work sharing program adopted to begin August 1983.

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1984	Maximum WBA frozen July 1984 through June 1985. Maximum WBA to increase to 60% in July following Dec. 31 when fund balance at least 2.4% of total wages.				
1985				<p>Marginal Labor Force Attachment (MLFA)--If 13 times WBA exceeds total wages in higher of two preceding comparable quarters, then claimant is determined to have MLFA. Exceptions for illness, disability, new labor force entrants and reentrants, and those having at least 80 hours of work in each quarter of base year.</p> <p>For claimants with MLFA status, suitability of work is determined under same rules as for extended benefits (see above). Failure to accept suitable work involves denial until WBA is earned in each of at least 5 weeks. Claimant must make 5 employer contacts each week, depending on labor market conditions.</p>	<p>State additional benefits program providing up to 6 weeks of benefits beginning June 1985; to end December 1985; suspended if extended benefits or comparable federally-financed program in effect. Alternative state trigger for extended benefits of 6% suspended June 1985 through December 1985.</p>

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1986				MLFA provisions on eligibility, suitable work, and work search repealed March 1986.	
1987			Refilers must earn 6 times WBA since waiting period of prior benefit year.		Tips considered as wages for UI purposes. Alternative base year of last four completed calendar quarters.
1988				Labor Dispute--Benefits denied if unemployed due to a strike; stoppage of work no longer a factor; benefits are allowed if unemployed due to a lockout, except in multi-employer disputes where one employer is struck and other employers lock out their workers.	
1989	Maximum WBA is 60% of average weekly wage in state.				
1990			Refilers must earn 6 times WBA since initial separation from employment in previous benefit year.		
1991					Timber Retraining Benefits (TRB) enacted for certain occupations and counties.

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1993	Maximum WBA is 70% of average weekly wage in state.		Additional qualifying requirement for extended benefits: 40 times WBA in base year earnings or base year earnings of 1.5 times high quarter earnings.	<p>Voluntary Quit/Misconduct/Refusal of Suitable Work -- 5 weeks and earnings of 5 times WBA.</p> <p>Misconduct--Must involve willful disregard of the employer's interest.</p> <p>Gross Misconduct--Cancellation of wage credits applies to affected employer only.</p> <p>Voluntary Quit for Marital or Family Responsibilities--Quitting to relocate for the spouse's employment outside existing labor market area is for good cause.</p> <p>Social Security pensions no longer deductible from UI benefits.</p>	<p>Stricter eligibility requirements for federal-state extended benefits suspended through 1994.</p> <p>Alternative extended benefit triggers adopted. If the three-month, seasonally adjusted total unemployment rate is at least 6.5% and is 10% greater than the rate for either of the two past years, then up to 13 weeks of extended benefits are payable. If the rate is at least 8%, then up to 20 weeks of extended benefits are payable.</p> <p>Temporary state additional benefit program adopted for those cut off from extended benefits.</p> <p>TRB expanded from one year to two years duration.</p>
1994					<p>Temporary Total Disability law for non-work related injury or illness is effective January 2, 1994.</p> <p>Supplemental Additional Benefits to pay remaining EB balances when EB triggers off.</p>
1995				<p>Reasonable assurance for part-time community and technical college instructors changes. Reasonable assurance does not apply if employment is contingent on enrollment, funding or program changes.</p>	<p>Worker Profiling & Reemployment Services begins.</p> <p>Settlements as a result of a negotiated termination are considered remuneration.</p>

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----- 1997 -----	-----	-----	-----	-----	TRB expanded to fishing industry. ----- Federal law takes effect requiring we offer withholding (15%) for IRS. -----
----- 1998 -----	-----	-----	-----	Change to academic year as it applies to part-time faculty at community and technical colleges. A conformity issue.	Claimants required to register in an electronic labor exchange system that supports direct employer access for the purpose of selecting job applicants. Job search monitoring. After 5 weeks, claimant must show evidence of work search efforts – 3 employer contacts or 1 in person job search activity at employment office each week. -----
----- 1999 -----	-----	-----	-----	-----	Legislation authorizing Timber Retraining Benefits ends. -----
----- 2000 -----	-----	-----	-----	Voluntary Quit/Misconduct/Refusal of Suitable Work -- 7 weeks and earnings of 7 times WBA in covered employment. Quit allows to follow spouse limited to mandatory transfer of spouse. -----	Training Benefits for dislocated workers enacted. -----
----- 2001 -----	-----	-----	-----	The definition of “reasonable assurance” as it applies to community and technical college instructors is changed. If an offer is conditioned on enrollment, funding, or program changes, the school must overcome the presumption that there is not a reasonable assurance.	Federal law change reduces the UI benefits voluntary IRS withholding amount from 15% to 10%. Benefits paid to employees of tribally-owned businesses under the same terms and conditions as benefits paid to all other claimants covered under Title 50 RCW. To conform to a 2000 federal law change.

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----- 2002	Maximum WBA frozen at \$496 until 2004, then calculated yearly through 2014.	-----	-----	Good cause can be found for those who leave work as a result of domestic violence or stalking.	<p>Federal extension (Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation- TEUC) effective March 2002.</p> <p>Temporary Total Disability claims can be filed without an original paper application and signature.</p> <p>Training Benefit law amended to allow more weeks of benefits to dislocated aerospace workers and to provide additional funding. Also provided that federal extensions and TRA pay before Training Benefits.</p>
----- 2003	-----	-----	-----	-----	<p>TEUC extended by federal law to August 2003.</p> <p>TEUC again extended by federal law to April 2004.</p> <p>TEUC-A for displaced airline and related workers enacted by federal law. Allows TEUC-A applications to be filed until December 2003, and benefits to be paid to January 2005.</p> <p>Credentialed health care workers unemployed as a result of contracting hepatitis C are considered dislocated workers for the purposes of Commissioner Approved Training.</p>
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2004	<p>For new claims filed January 4, 2004, and later, maximum WBA drops from \$510 to \$496. Maximum WBA calculation changed from 70% of the average weekly wage in the last calendar year to 63% or \$496, whichever is more.</p> <p>WBA calculation January 4, 2004, until January 1, 2005: 1/25th of average three high quarters in base year.</p>	<p>Maximum weeks payable reduced from 30 to 26 with new claims filed April 4, 2004, when state unemployment rate dropped to 6.8% in March 2004.</p>		<p>2003 legislative changes take effect January 4, 2004.</p> <p>Quits -- The reasons a person can quit and be eligible for benefits limited to 10 good cause reasons.</p> <p>Misconduct -- New definition of misconduct. Specifies acts not considered misconduct. Denial of regular misconduct is 10 weeks and earnings of 10 times the WBA in covered employment.</p> <p>Gross misconduct – New definition to include conduct that demonstrates a flagrant and wanton disregard of and for the rights, title, or interest of the employer or a fellow employee.</p> <p>Denial for gross misconduct is 10 weeks and earnings of 10 times the WBA and cancellation of greater of all wage credits from that employer or 680 hours of wage credits.</p>	<p>Liberal construction language removed from preamble.</p> <p>Expanded Job Search Monitoring program to include workers receiving benefits from Washington but living in another state. Requires contracting with other states to ensure out-of-state workers are actively seeking work.</p> <p>Claimants must make at least 3 employer contacts or 3 in-person job search activities per week. Provides a stronger denial for those who fail to seek work.</p>
2005	<p>January 2, 2005, WBA determined as 1% of total base year wages.</p> <p>New claims filed effective April 24, 2005, and later, WBA is 3.85% of average of the two high quarters in</p>				<p>Part-time (p/t) worker eligibility. Individuals otherwise eligible who establish claims with work of 17 or fewer hours a week are eligible for benefits while seeking work of only 17 or fewer hours a week.</p> <p>Liberal construction language returned to preamble.</p> <p>Joint legislative task force on UI</p>

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	base year.				benefit equity created.